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AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE EXTENSION
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

COMMUNITY WORK OF THE RURAL HIGH SCHOOL

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HARLEM SCHOOL. COURTESY OF O. G. KERN, WINNEBAGO CO., ILL.

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COMMUNITY WORK IN THE RURAL HIGH SCHOOL

"When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather; for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather today; for the sky is red and lowering.—Ye can discern the face of the sky, but ye cannot discern the signs of the times."

With respect to the vision of the possibilities for good of community work in the rural school, this criticism of the Great Teacher may apply to many of our school men of today. The signs of the times, rightly discerned, indicate that the schools teaching only the traditional subjects, preparing only a few studiously inclined pupils for college, affording little or no vocational training, exerting but little influence upon those members of the community not enrolled in the regular classes, are no longer satisfactory to the tax-payer nor to the progressive leaders of education. If there are any good things in education, and we all believe there are many, if the high school has come into possession of some of these good things, it must go forth from its four walls, from its books, and from its laboratories, and bring these good things to all the people of the community, so that some of the ignorance, some of the superstition, some of the suffering, some of the waste and some of the unhappiness may be ameliorated. This is especially needful in rural communities, and a rural high school comes short of its highest mission, when it fails to minister to community needs wherever it can.

The activities suggested in this circular are called "Community Work" for want of a better name. Community work is a form of extension work, growing out of vocational instruction in schools. The extension idea is a prevalent one in the business world, in the religious world, and in the educational world. As institutions have reached out and extended their influence, they have enlarged and enriched their own lives. Thus it must be with the rural high school. To live and teach apart from community

interests, is to die with "dry rot." To make its life and teachings felt among all classes of people in the community is to bring new life to the school and permanent progress to the community.

Most of the lines of community work concretely suggested in the following pages have been tried out personally by the writer in rural high schools, and they are unreservedly commended as practical and helpful.

In order to do effective community work as suggested in the following pages, the principal of the high school should provide his office with a complete card index, giving information about each person in the school community. The address, occupation, special interests, attitudes, and any other information necessary to guide the school in community coöperation, should be listed on these cards. From these cards a complete mailing list should be made up and kept on file at the principal's office. Much of this information can be obtained from the assessor's records at the county court house. The principal should early acquaint himself with the roads, farms, natural resources, and locations of the homes of the patrons of his district.

ARBOR AND FARM PRODUCT DAY

About the first and most practical piece of community work in the fall term of school is Arbor and Farm Product Day. A week or two before the appointed day, the principal should send out a letter to every patron of the school, explaining the plans and purposes of the meeting and inviting the coöperation of every home. Some such form as the following might be used:

"Dear Friend and Patron of the.....School:

"The teachers and pupils of.....School have decided to have an Arbor and Farm Product Day....., and we cordially invite your coöperation and attendance. Bring good samples of corn, apples, potatoes, tomatoes, chickens, or any other farm product you think good enough to show, and help us to arrange an exhibit for the benefit of all. No prizes can be awarded but the exhibits should have an educational value. During the afternoon the pupils will plant trees and shrubs on the school grounds, and a short program of appropriate exercises will be given. At night a public educational address will be given.

"The school is yours and you are ours; come and let us work together in the interest of the whole community.

Sincerely yours.

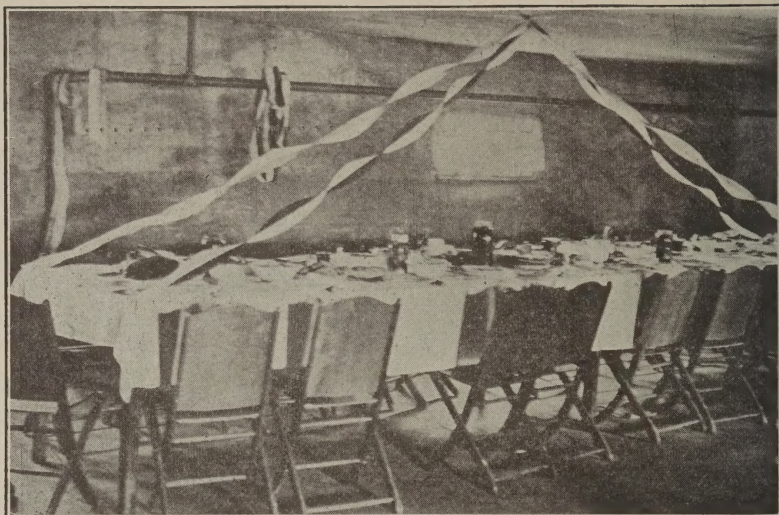
.....
Principal."



EXHIBIT OF FARM PRODUCTS AT SCHOOL

The above letter will give some idea of the preparation for the day necessary on the part of the school. Various committees should be appointed among the patrons, teachers and pupils who are to be responsible for certain duties. There might be a committee on reception, arrangement of exhibits, cleaning up grounds, securing trees, providing programs, and any other local needs to be provided in order to make the day a success. The program should not fail to provide for a few talks by patrons of the school.

In connection with the work of preparing exhibits of farm products, it would be a most commendable activity for the rural schools to coöperate in planning a Public School Day at the County Fair.



A DINNER FOR EVERYBODY AT A COUNTRY SCHOOL COMMUNITY MEETING.
CADWELL, ILLINOIS.

COUNTRY LIFE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

At the close of the foregoing exercises, opportunity will be afforded for the principal to set in motion other phases of community work, and throw out lines of definite action. For example, a country life library association may be organized. In anticipation of this opportunity, the principal should have about one hundred membership cards printed, such as:

.....High School.
Country Life Library Association
Member.....
Fee 50 ¢.

On the back of the card should be printed a list of the books proposed for the library. The following books are suggested:

COUNTRY LIFE LIBRARY.

Report of Commission on Country Life—Bailey
 Chapters on Rural Progress—Butterfield
 The State and the Farmer—Bailey
 The Rural Life Problem of the United States—Plunkett
 The Nature Study Idea—Bailey
 Checking the Waste—Gregory
 The Land We Live In—Price
 Getting Acquainted with the Trees—McFarland
 A Boy on the Farm—Abbott
 The Corn Lady—Fields
 Stories of Country Life—Bradish
 Black Beauty—Sewell
 A Dog of Flanders—Ouida
 Good Health—Gulick
 The Hoosier School Master—Eggleston
 Famous Poems Explained—Barbe
 Knighthood in Germ and Flower—Cox
 David Copperfield—Dickens
 Tales from Shakespeare—Lamb
 The Shepherd of the Hills—Wright
 The Fat of the Land—Streeter
 Manual of Practical Farming—McLennan
 Beginnings in Agriculture—Mann
 Lessons in Agriculture—Nolan
 Farm Paper
 Farm Boys and Girls—McKeever
 Neighborhood Entertainments—Stern
 Keeping up with Lizzie—Bachelor

It should be explained to all that every patron paying fifty cents becomes a member and is issued one of the cards. Membership entitles one to access to all the books of the library listed on the card. It should be made clear that the fee goes toward the purchasing of the books, and that for fifty cents a member may get to read a dozen or more books. The fee might well be \$1.00. After as many names are secured as possible at the meeting, cards should be given to the older pupils who will solicit further membership in the community. The principal or

some responsible pupil may act as librarian and keep strict account under rules of the books used. Small, cheap slips as follows may be used as "checks" on books sent out:

<p>.....High School</p> <p style="margin-top: 20px;">Country Life Library Association</p> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">Name of book taken.....</p> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">Member.....</p>

On the back of the card library rules as follows may be printed:

1. A membership fee of 50 cents entitles all students and patrons to the use of all the books of the library.

2. Membership fees shall be used for the purchase of books for the library.

3. No book shall be retained by a member longer than two weeks without renewal.

4. Each member is held responsible for the care of the books in his possession.

5. No member shall take more than two books from the library at the same time.

6. The Principal of the High School or some student selected by him shall act as librarian.

If there is a State Library Commission, the high school should coöperate with it, in becoming the head-quarters for the traveling libraries which the Commission sends out. The principal should write to the State Library Commission and learn the plans under which libraries are loaned to schools.

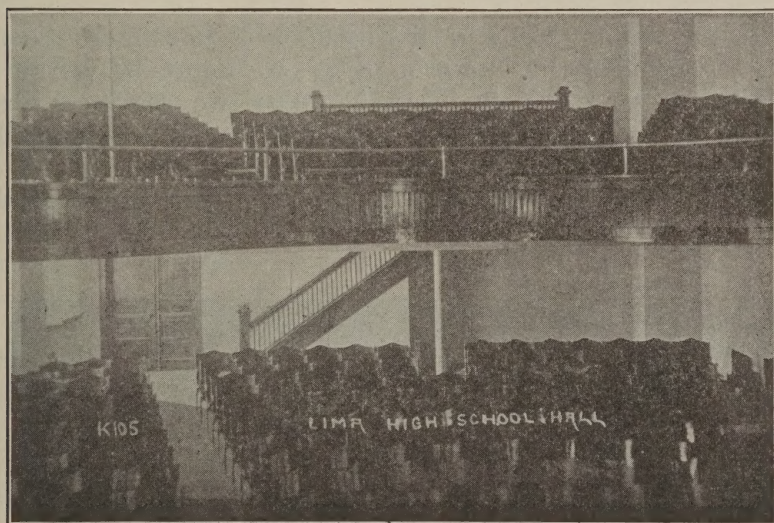
LECTURE COURSES

Early in the school year the rural high school may arrange for a popular lecture course, and this form of community work has been tested sufficiently to warrant its approval by progressive school men. It is possible to provide a very good course with little cost, and at the beginning it is not wise to risk heavy expenditures for a lecture course. One or two men may usually be dated from the State University or College of Agriculture, free

of charges; a good lawyer, minister, or physician from the nearest city may be willing to offer his services for expenses. A man from the State Department of Schools, a member of Congress or of the State Legislature is often available; local musical organizations may provide a musical number, and other talent may be obtained at slight cost.

Let the principal of the school start after some of this talent in persistent earnestness and he can soon be able to shape up a course that will appeal to his people.

Here is the way a lecture course ticket read, arranged by a principal of a small rural high school this year:



AUDITORIUM OF A RURAL HIGH SCHOOL, HOWE, INDIANA.

HIGH SCHOOL LECTURE COURSE

SEASON TICKET

- Oct. 31, '11, Lecture, Professor from Agricultural College.
- Dec. 1, '11, Lecture, Professor from University.
- Jan. 5, '12, Concert, Local Chorus.
- Feb. 1, '12, Lecture, City Physician.
- Mar. 3, '12, Lecture, Congressman.
- Apr. 5, '12, School Play.

—ADMIT ONE—

The tickets were distributed as compliments by the high school students among the patrons and friends of the school. The numbers of this course have been well attended and I am told that they were popular in the community.

After a year or two of these free lecture courses, it is easy to begin charging a small price for the season tickets, and thus secure lyceum or other talent of high order, and establish a permanent lecture course.

LITERARY SOCIETIES

It is a common thing for high schools to have literary societies. This may be made a good form of community work. If the school is large enough there should be two societies. Programs could be provided on alternating Friday evenings and the public invited. Young people of the community who are not in school will attend and these might frequently be asked to take part on the programs.



HIGH SCHOOL GLEE CLUB AND ORCHESTRA—LIMA INDIANA
TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL.

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SCHOOLS

As the winter comes on, and there is little opportunity for the country people to have social or educational advantages, the rural high school may coöperate with the Agricultural College in the organization of an Extension School for farmers in the community. Where twenty-five or thirty local farmers agree to enroll, pay a small fee and attend the school for one week, the Extension Department of the College of Agriculture will send men and equipment and conduct a school for these farmers and their families.

The high school could easily and profitably take the initiative in this matter, provide a room for the school, get up the enrollment among the farmers and arrange for the instructions from the College. The work of such extension schools consists of lectures and demonstrations along various agricultural lines by men who are experts in their subjects. High schools will find that the Colleges of Agriculture are ready and willing to cooperate in this form of community work, and the only reason why there might be a failure to secure such a coöperation for any rural high school, would be because the College would be unable to find men enough to supply the demand.

If there is a teacher of Agriculture in the high school, there is no reason why these agricultural short courses could not be managed entirely by the high school teacher and the help from the farmers. In many states provision is made for short courses during the winter to be held by the agricultural department of the high school. These short courses conducted by high schools may begin after the Christmas holidays and extend over a period of four or six weeks and provide courses for farm boys and girls who cannot attend the regular courses. The last week of such a short course could well be called "Farmers' Week", and special instruction and lectures provided for all farmers and their wives. In connection with such short courses it is advisable to call on local talent as much as possible for talks and instructional assistance.

Special courses in Commercial Arithmetic, Business Law, Rural Life Interests, English and Composition, Agriculture, Manual Training and Household Arts and Science, should be organized for these short courses in the rural high school.

In all these meetings of country people, suggested in this circular, no opportunity should be lost to have prominent em-

phasis given, wherever appropriate to the improvement of health and rural sanitary conditions and to the improvement of public highways.

The rural high school should own a stereopticon and a number of good lantern slides to use in extension work as well as in the regular work of the schools. Good lantern slides may be borrowed from the various divisions of the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., for only the cost of expressage each way.

FARM ORGANIZATIONS

Not long ago I was present at a State Farmers' Institute where hundreds of leading farmers were in attendance from every part of a great agricultural state. In one session the subject for discussion was, "How to Combat Successfully the Chinch Bug." The difficult problem in all the discussion seemed to be, how can farmers work together to combat the chinch bug, for unless there be organized effort, it is useless for one farmer to do much in the way of fighting the bugs. One farmer arose in the meeting and in a tone of despair, said, "Pray, somebody tell us how we can form an organization, and who are to be our leaders in the rural communities."

This gentleman voiced the real situation, which the farmers in most communities perfectly realize. I wondered, as I heard this "call from Macedonia", where are the rural school teachers, and why don't they see the opportunity? Especially should the principal of the rural high school be a leader in the organization of the farmers of the school community.

First and foremost among farmers' organizations of this country is the National Order of Patrons of Husbandry, commonly known as the Grange. Many people think this splendid old order is a thing of the past, but it is the largest and most active of all farmers' organizations of today. It is the only effectively organized national institution among the farmers at present, reaching into almost every state and territory of the union.

It is founded on the principles of education and coöperation among the country people, and forbidding partisanship in politics and religion, it is bound to survive and grow. If the principal of the rural high school is not a member of the Grange, or even if he is a member, let him write to the state master of the

Grange and ask him to send a deputy into the community to organize a Grange. It will not cost anybody anything except the \$1.00 fees for men and 50 cent fees for women who join the new organization. Of course the principal should have previously worked up a sentiment either by privately talking among the farmers or by calling a meeting for the purpose of talking organization. At least fifteen members should be ready to join the Grange when the deputy comes.

After the Grange is organized and a regular place and time of meeting determined upon, and of course the school house should be the place,—many opportunities for excellent community work will arise. Aside from the literary, social and educational advantages afforded by the regular meetings, the opportunity for effective coöperation in buying and selling is offered. Farmers of the community will quickly see that it is to their advantage to get together to purchase car-load lots of lime and fertilizers for their fields, spray material for their orchards or pure-bred sires for their live-stock breeding.

The school principal who can tactfully and sincerely lead out in these organized activities, is not only laying a permanent foundation for his own success, but for the better support of the school in all its departments. In mere financial gains, such a farmers' organization successfully carried on, would more than pay all dues expended by the farmers and it would go far toward making it possible to increase the teachers' salaries.

If it is not feasible to organize a Grange, the principal of the rural high school, together with the teacher of agriculture, and the advanced pupils may organize a local agricultural club, composed of the farmers and their wives. Such a club should have a constitution, a set of officers, and a definite program to carry out. The farm women may have separate sessions, where questions of home life on the farm and other issues of interest may be discussed. Let the organization once be formed, under intelligent leadership and many avenues of coöperation and community activities will open up.

Boys' and girls' agricultural clubs, which will be discussed later, should by all means be a feature of the organization work of the rural high schools.

TEACHERS' ORGANIZATIONS

It can be said to the credit of the rural school teachers that

they are, and have been for some time, more effectively organized than the farmers. Teachers are accustomed to organization and progress in this work should not be difficult. The rural high school has a place of influence in its relation to the country school teacher of the community. Many of the country teachers in the vicinity of the high school will have graduated from the high school and will therefore be interested in any effort of the high school to extend its influence into the country districts.

The principal of the rural high school should call a meeting of the country teachers of his district or township and organize a "schoolmaster's club," or some such organization having more to it than a mere teachers' institute. These teachers' organizations might be a sort of literary, social, or reading circle, and meet fortnightly at some home in the community. Rural and agricultural problems should form a large part of the programs of these meetings. A regular course of lessons or agricultural demonstrations given by the principal would be helpful to the country teachers. Throughout the year the high school principal should issue, as regularly as seems wise, circular letters, giving outline plans, practical devices, helpful suggestions, etc., along lines of rural school work, especially in nature-study and agriculture. Some of the agricultural demonstration work of the class in agriculture in the high school, such as pruning, spraying, testing herds, etc., might be given in the neighborhood of the country schools of the high school district, and thus become a sort of extension work from the high school through the coöperation of the country school teachers. Nature-study rambles and cross-country "hikes" on Saturday for rural school teachers under the direction of the principal, is a good scheme to promote social and educational interest. These and many other coöperative plans could be worked out in a teachers' organization, centering in the rural high school.

ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE SCHOOL TOUCHING THE LIFE OF THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

Certain organizations among the students of the high school may include young people not in the school, and thus have a far-reaching influence on the social and educational life of the community. For instance, the Boys' Corn Club, or the Girls' Home Science Clubs, which every active high school should organize, may include young people not in the school and be a

valuable means of social and educational improvement to them. The organization of boys' and girls' agriculture clubs is so simple and so universally done, that it is not necessary here to give details of suggestions as to organizations. Suffice it to say that every rural high school should have active agricultural clubs among its students.



GIRLS' TOMATO CLUB

It should be possible in a rural high school to organize various musical clubs,—bands, orchestras, glee clubs, choruses, etc., to enliven the work of the whole school and to furnish music for the functions undertaken by the school in the community work. One rural high school, the writer knows of, had a glee-club which gave concerts throughout the country in country churches and village halls. The good results of such community work can hardly be overestimated.

Another community activity often possible in the rural high school is amateur journalism. A school paper, published weekly or monthly, going out into all the homes of the patrons furnishes a splendid avenue through which the principal and the school may touch in a constructive way the life of the whole community. There may be school news, agricultural contributions, bulletins of announcements, educational policies, and literary productions in the make-up of a school paper.

The principal should make use of the local county papers in promoting the educational interests of the community.

An art exhibit at the school building is an activity in which the whole community may be profited. There are several art supply houses which will send out to reliable guarantors, splendid collections of reprints of famous paintings. These pictures may be exhibited in the school building, along with the hand-work, drawing and other art work of the high school students. A small admission charge may be made and money enough raised to purchase a good picture for the school. Often several pictures will be sold to the patrons of the community, and the whole result of the exhibit will be of permanent educational value in raising art standards and the appreciation of good pictures.

EXTENSION AND COÖPERATION WORK AMONG FARMERS

In somewhat the same way that agricultural extension work has given new life and cooperative support to the colleges of agriculture in this country, so must similar forms of extension activities along agricultural lines vitalize the rural high schools. This is what is being done already in hundreds of high schools all over this country. Whenever the boys and girls of the rural high school are willing and able, through the direction of a wide-awake, up-to-date teacher, to carry to the homes and farms of the community some practical and useful knowledge which the farmers can use in their life-work and business, then the tax-payers will rally to the support of that school and thus more and more enable the school to become what it should be, a center of all that is helpful to the community. The following concrete examples of agricultural extension work are entirely practical in the rural high school:

Testing Seed Corn.—During the month preceding the corn planting season, the agricultural laboratory of the high school should become an active center for testing the seed corn of the farmers of the community. The boys should bring about one bushel of ear corn for each test, and there should be enough boxes made by the students, to test all the corn brought in. Methods of making these boxes and seed corn tests are fully described in bulletins and text-books. The school should be able to report to the farmers the per cent of germination of all seed corn brought in to be tested.

Testing for Butter Fat in Milk of Cows.—Every rural high school should own a Babcock milk tester. A good four-bottle tester

can be purchased for about \$8.00, and the operation of the machine is so simple that any high school boy can use it. The boys and girls from the farms of the school community should bring in composite samples from each of the cows on the home farm and have the milk tested for its butter-fat content. The class in agriculture should be able to show that a cow whose milk tests only two per cent or even three per cent butter fat is probably not paying for her keep. These facts should be reported to the farmers after the tests have been carefully made, and a new interest in both the school and the farm will have been aroused.

Poultry Contests.—Under the auspices of the high school, the following projects in poultry work are recommended:

1. Early in the school year offer prizes to the boys or girls, keeping a pen of poultry of a given number, of any breed, and for a given time, say sixty or ninety days, and producing the greatest number of eggs from the pen. The prizes very appropriately awarded might be,—

1st. A setting of eggs from a pure-bred type.

2nd. A good pure-bred hen.

3rd. A book on poultry culture.

2. In the spring another project in raising chickens might be undertaken.

Let any boy or girl start with a given number of eggs from any breed of chickens and hatch and raise a brood of young chickens, either by means of the hen or the incubator. Prizes might be awarded as follows:

1. For the largest number of chickens successfully raised from a given number of eggs.

First prize—A pen of prize chickens of good breed.

Second prize—A pair of chickens.

Third prize—A book on poultry culture.

2. For the best exhibit of a poultry pen, the same series of prizes may be awarded. All these projects would naturally culminate in an exhibition on Farm Products' Day as noted earlier in this Circular.

These are merely suggestions of some of the simplest projects. The resourceful teacher will think of others in connection with poultry raising.

Soil Fertility Plot Demonstration Work.—Soil analyses and pot-culture tests have shown that the commonest deficiencies of our soils are a lack of nitrogen, limestone and phosphorus. Crude

and simple tests for the presence of limestone in the soils of the school community may be made by the class in agriculture. Let the boys bring a ball of the soil from the field to be tested. Moisten a lump of the soil, break it in two, and place a strip of blue litmus paper between the pieces of the broken lump, and firmly press the soil together around the litmus paper. If after ten or fifteen minutes the paper turns red, it indicates that the soil is sour and probably needs limestone. Take a lump of the soil and pour a few drops of hydrochloric acid upon it, if it does not effervesce it is lacking in limestone.

Upon several farms in the community thus tested, demonstration plots in the use of fertilizers should be laid out. For the sake of experiment in communities where limestone and phosphorus have not been used, on as many home farms as will take up the work and provide the material, the following scheme should be tried:

Lay off in the fall or winter a plot, 4 rods by 4 rods ($1/10$ of an acre) and apply 50 lbs. of ground limestone and 200 lbs. of finely ground rock phosphate. If it is applied on a clover field, so much the better; in any case add about a ton of stable manure to the plot before turning under. Lay off a second plot, as a



THREE HUNDRED PUPILS IN THE SCHOOL GARDEN AT
LIMA, IND., ON PATRONS' DAY

“check” to which no treatment is given. For one plot to be used by the school for demonstration purposes, The Jno. Ruhm Co., of Mt. Pleasant, Tenn., will probably furnish a 200-lb. sack of rock phosphate free. Several such test plots should be made on the farms of the community by the boys of the high school class in agriculture. Select plots on fields to be planted in corn.

Pot culture methods of analyzing the needs of the soil of the farms in the community may be carried on by a teacher who understands this work.

For a demonstration plot at the school, the following plan is a modification of the present agricultural experiments at the Western Illinois State Normal, Macomb, as suggested by Mr. J. T. Johnson, and recommended by Co. Supt., G. W. Brown of Paris.

10	11	12	13	14	15
20	21	22	23	24	25
30	31	32	33	34	35
40	41	42	43	44	45

General Suggestions:—Every boundary line should be a grass or gravel walk three feet wide. Every square should be 18x18 feet. Before harvesting crops, for records, each plot or square should be cut to a perfect rod square. For yield per acre, multiply by one hundred sixty.

Rotations should be conducted as follows:

Plots 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15—Continuous corn crops.

Plots 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25—Corn and oats rotation.

Plots 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35—Corn, oats and clover rotation.

Plots 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45—Corn, oats, clover and wheat rotation.

The experiments in the value of standard fertilizers could be tested in this way:

Plots 10, 20, 30, 40—Nothing.

Plots 11, 21, 31, 41—Apply manure.

Plots 12, 22, 32, 42—Manure and lime. .

Plots 13, 23, 33, 43—Manure, lime and phosphorus. .

Plots 14, 24, 34, 44—Manure, lime phosphorus and potassium.

Plots 15, 25, 35, 45—Nothing, and in addition, permit no vegetable matter to decay. Remove it.

Only a small amount of land is needed for this work and it is worth the effort necessary to carry it out.

Orchard Pruning and Spraying.—In March or April the high school class in agriculture can do good extension work along the lines of orchard pruning and spraying in the community. On some Friday or Saturday it should be arranged that the class will give a demonstration in one of the orchards of the community. The farmers and their families should be invited in to see this work. The boys under the direction of the teacher should prune old and young apple trees and be able to explain the principles and methods of their work. A spray-pump should also be provided and the trees of the orchard properly sprayed in the presence of the farmers. The extension departments of the state colleges of agriculture are usually ready and willing to coöperate with an active school in undertaking this work.

School Nurseries of Orchard and Forest Trees. If there is as much as one-tenth of an acre of ground available about the



STUDENTS PRUNING A FARMER'S ORCHARD

high school building, not used for playgrounds or school gardens, it would be a good opportunity for community work to set out seedlings or grafted trees in nursery rows. The ground should be plowed or spaded up and prepared thoroughly as though for seed sowing. Rows about three feet apart should be laid out and the little trees set in the rows about ten or twelve inches apart. Seedlings of forest or shade trees, such as *Catalpa speciosa*, soft maple, white ash, American elm, tulip, linden, etc., may be obtained from any reliable nursery at little cost. Seedlings of apple or other fruit trees may be bought cheaply by the hundreds and set in the nursery row. These may be grafted when set out, or budded later, from bearing trees of the desired varieties by the class in agriculture.

After these little trees have grown and been cared for for a year or two, they may be distributed to the homes of the patrons to be planted in the yards as shade trees or in the orchards for fruit, as the case may be.

Hot-beds and Green-house Supplies. If it is possible for the high school to have a greenhouse, much valuable community work can be done by growing such vegetables and flowers as can be transplanted. Tomatoes, cabbage, egg-plants, cauliflower, salvia, chrysanthemums, astors, castor beans, etc., may be grown at school and at the proper season sent out by the pupils to be transplanted at their homes. If a greenhouse is not practical, a hotbed may be constructed and many vegetables and flowers grown here, to be distributed for the home gardens. It will have a very salutary effect upon the relations between the home and the school for the home to look to the school for benefits of a material sort as well as of a more intellectual and spiritual nature and not be disappointed in receiving such benefits.

SPECIAL DAY OBSERVANCES.

When the community has learned to look to the rural high school for leadership in educational, social, and agricultural affairs, it is easy to lead out in all sorts of community activities, and do ever enlarging service for all the people. In the celebration of special days, opportunity is afforded to teach lessons of patriotism and appreciation for the great and good men and principles that have meant most in our country's history. These lessons may be brought home forcibly to all the people of the

community through the coöperation of the patrons and pupils in special day observances under the auspices of the high school.

To be concrete as to method, let the principal of the high school present a plan similar to the following to his teachers and pupils and ask their coöperation: Suppose it is to be a Decoration Day observance. Consent of the owner of some near-by grove should be obtained and arrangements made to hold the meeting there. Committees from the teachers and high school pupils should then be appointed; committees on preparation of the grounds, on music, on program, on flowers for decoration of the graves, etc. A program should be arranged consisting of appropriate orations, declamations, songs, etc., given by the pupils of the school. The principal should preside at this meeting, and as many old soldiers as are in the community should be asked to sit on the platform. Brief addresses should be given by some of the old soldiers, or by any prominent citizens of the community. Of course if there is a school band, it should occupy a large place on the program and head a march to the cemetery, where all the pupils and patrons may contribute in the decoration of the graves.



COUNTRY HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM, ALL COUNTRY BOYS,
LIMA, IND.

Under the auspices and leadership of the teachers of the rural high school the following special days should be observed, with appropriate programs of music, declamations and orations, and such activities as are necessary to make the day mean what it was set apart for: Arbor Day, Easter Tide, May Day, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. The state department of public schools in many states provides attractive and practical programs for schools desiring to observe these special days. Sturgis and Walton Company put out a little book by Stern, called "Neighborhood Entertainment," which, among other excellent suggestions, outlines plans for social evenings, and special days such as New Year's Eve, Saint Valentine's Day, Washington's Birthday, Saint Patrick's Day, etc. Unless the high school encourages and directs some of these social affairs of the young people of the community, they are likely to find their guidance and social functions under less elevating and more questionable leadership.

ATHLETIC MEETS AND PLAY FESTIVALS.

Students of rural sociology are convinced that the play life is not sufficiently provided for or directed among country people.



YOUNG ATHLETES AT A COUNTRY PLAY FESTIVAL, ASHER, ILL.
(Courtesy of Supt. G. W. Brown, Edgar Co.)

The hunger for play in human life is just as real and as instinctive as the hunger for food, and unless this hunger be satisfied properly the life will become dwarfed and less efficient in the real work of the world. Play should never become an end in itself. Schools should not encourage athletics in order to train up professional athletes, but play should be encouraged, provided for, and directed as a means to a more efficient life of usefulness. In the rural communities no better leadership can be found to direct the play life of all the people than the rural high school.

Some time in May let there be planned an athletic meet and play festival, to be held at or near the high school, wherever suitable grounds can be obtained. Several neighboring schools might enter into competition in the usual "stunts" given on athletic field days, but it is not necessary to have other schools enter the meet. Let the larger boys in the school or the young men of the community who are not in school enter the contests in running, jumping, vaulting, etc., competing against each other. Set apart an afternoon to these events. Invite all the people in. While the larger boys are engaging in these field athletic contests, other events for the girls and smaller children should be planned to be going on at the same time. The girls might play basket ball. A May pole dance or drill would be a delightful event, and ingenious lady teachers will easily provide attractive drills and games for children to play on the lawns at this play-festival. The school band will of course enliven the whole occasion with stirring music.

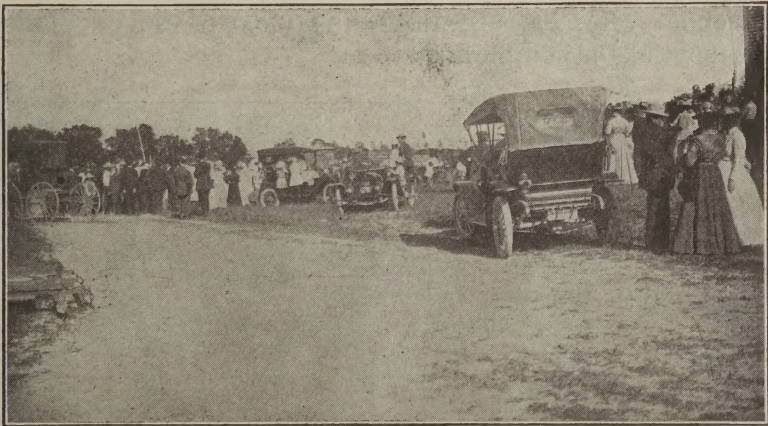


AT THE COUNTRY SCHOOL, PLAY FESTIVAL, CADWELL, ILLINOIS.

FARMERS' PICNICS.

With this same motive to provide good recreation for country people, the rural high school should plan and carry out a farmers' picnic, either in the fall or spring. Locate some attractive grove, provide speaker's platform and seats, and advertise the picnic. The principal of the school should of course seek the coöperation of the boys and the interested men of the community in making these arrangements possible. You can depend upon the women to provide the "eats," as well as some of the best things of the program. The high school should provide a program of music, declamations, orations, etc., and there should be no difficulty in securing a speaker from the College of Agriculture or from among the local leaders to give addresses. The theme of the program should be rural life and its interests.

Several communities in the country have social circles, and the farmers and their families meet at the homes of the members at stated times for social intercourse, recreation, and refreshments. The rural high school could easily encourage and probably inaugurate such social organizations among the country people of the community.



FARMERS GATHERED AT A COMMUNITY MEETING, ASHER ILL., EDGAR CO.
(Courtesy of Supt. G. W. Brown.)

SUMMER PLANS AND PROJECTS.

Even after the regular school year closes, the rural high school that has caught the spirit of community work may con-

tinue to be active through its teachers, students and patrons in the service of community life. A summer encampment for boys for a week or ten days under the guidance of the high school principal or some man teacher would be an excellent thing to have. If the school has a Boy Scout organization, and such an organization would certainly be commendable in a rural high school, the encampment idea could be easily carried out. It would pay in value received, not estimated in dollars and cents, for the school principal to take part of his vacation in this work for boys of the community.

Other summer activities inspired by the rural high school are various projects along agricultural lines. Each student in the agricultural class should carry on some project, raise some crops or animals on the home farm during the summer. Growing the most and best corn on an acre, making variety tests with corn, properly caring for a given number of fruit trees, setting and caring for a catalpa grove, raising and feeding a bunch of pigs, keeping a pen of poultry, planting, caring for and marketing vegetables from a garden, sowing an acre of alfalfa,—these and many other projects are entirely practical, and besides giving useful and profitable vocation in vacation, they touch vitally the interests of the whole community and tide over the break between the school years, greatly to the advantage of the school and to the benefit of the community life.



A CORNER IN THE SCHOOL GARDEN AT CADWELL, ILL.

(MINNIE DE SART, TEACHER.)

COUNTY Y. M. C. A. WORK.

If the rural high school is fortunate enough to be located in a county having the organized Y. M. C. A. county work, it should certainly open its doors to this religious movement and have a hearty coöperation with the county secretary. If there is no organized county Y. M. C. A. work, the narrowest religious bigot of the community could not object to the organization of a Young Men's Christian Association as a part of the community work of the rural high school. Statistics show that among the Protestants, especially, religious education is woefully neglected and that the percentage of juvenile crime rises in proportion as religious education of the young is neglected.

With the activities throughout the community emanating from the high school it is but natural that there should be activities along lines of religious organization. The simplest and most practical way to make a beginning is for the principal to appoint a committee of seven or ten young men who are in sympathy with this work to arrange for regular Sunday meetings. These meetings should be strictly undenominational in character and they may consist of the ordinary devotional exercises and brief religious talks by the leading men of the community. In one instance the writer knows of, such meetings developed into a well-organized Y. M. C. A., having a gymnasium, reading room, and parlor, furnished and equipped by the citizens of the community.

If nothing so definite as an organized religious association seems advisable under the auspices of the rural high school and even if such activities are successful, the principal and the whole school should encourage and coöperate with religious activities of the community. The principal should be able and willing to help in the Sunday schools or speak from the pulpit if need be, and the musical and literary talent of the school should willingly and faithfully contribute to the service of religious worship among the churches of the community.

REFERENCES ON COMMUNITY WORK.

- Among Country Schools—Kern.
 Neighborhood Entertainments—Stern.
 Community Work of the Rural High School—Crosby. (From
 Agriculture Department Year Book, 1910.)
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 The Corn Lady—Fields.
 One Hundred Lessons in Agriculture—Nolan.
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 New York.
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